

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Baptist Retirement Home

other names/site number Baptist Old People's Home

Name of Multiple Property Listing \_\_\_\_\_

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

street & number 316 Randolph Street

☐

not for publication

city or town Maywood

☐

vicinity

state Illinois

county Cook

zip code 60153

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: \_\_\_ **national** \_\_\_ **statewide** \_\_\_ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: \_\_\_ **A** \_\_\_ **B** \_\_\_ **C** \_\_\_ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Baptist Retirement Home  
Name of Property

Cook ,Illinois  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register**

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

HEALTH CARE/ sanitarium

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY  
REVIVALS/Tudor Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK, STONE, STUCCO, WOOD

roof: SYNTHETICS, STONE

other: METAL

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Baptist Retirement Home is a four- and five-story former retirement home and hospital situated on a full city block in the heart of Maywood, Illinois. The original Tudor Revival retirement home, completed in 1930, was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of E. E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts. Two large modern additions—the first designed by Elmer C. Roberts in 1955 and the second designed by Chicago architect Bertram Weber in 1964—added additional common areas, residents' rooms, a chapel, and modern hospital facilities in a U-shaped block that extended north and more than doubled the size of the original building. The Baptist Retirement Home as it stands today is a flat-roofed masonry structure with four large wings radiating from a central core. A one-story chapel (completed in 1955) extends from the west side of the central core. The two main entrances to the building are located at the center of the north and south elevations, facing Randolph Street on the north and Pine Street on the south. The lot is flat, with a semi-circular drive on the north end, a paved parking area on the west, and paved walkways along the perimeter and leading to the main south entrance.

Architecturally, the building is a large and impressive example of a Tudor Revival-style institutional building. The half timbering on the upper floors, crenelated polygonal stairs towers, steeply pitched cross gables, slate roofs, and multi-paned steel casement windows flanking the main entrance are all indicative of the style. On the interior, the main entrance lobby also features many typical Tudor Revival details, including mosaic tile floor, heavy wood beams, textured plaster walls, and wrought iron railings at the flanking stairs. The 1955 and 1965 additions that extend north of the main building are thoughtfully designed modern institutional structures that were completed within the period of significance and contribute to the significance of the property. The main entrance on the north elevation of the 1955/1965 block is flanked by large plate glass windows set in a modern surround of polished granite. A distinctive mid-century concrete and metal canopy extends from the main entrance over the semi-circular driveway.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### **Site and Massing**

The Baptist Retirement Home is located at 316 Randolph Road, situated on a full city block bounded on the north by Randolph Street, on the south by Pine Street, on the east by South 3rd Avenue and on the west by South 4th Avenue. The four- and five-story building is a flat-roofed masonry structure with four large wings radiating from a central core. A one-story chapel extends from the west side of the central core. The main entrances are located at the center of the north and south elevations, facing Randolph Street on the north and Pine Street on the south. The lot is flat, with a semi-circular drive on the north end, a paved parking area on the west, and paved walkways along the perimeter and leading to the main south entrance. The Emerson Elementary School is located just south of the building, and the block to the west houses the Maywood Post Office and the First Baptist Church. The remaining blocks surrounding the building are lined with single-family homes.

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## Exterior

### *1930 Building*

The original building, constructed in 1930, faces south onto a central courtyard. It is a splayed U-shaped plan, consisting of a four-story central mass with two large projecting three-story rectangular wings set on raised basements. The building has a highly ornamented Tudor Revival exterior with a mixture of formal and rustic Tudor elements. All elevations are clad in multi-tonal yellow and brown brick with limestone detailing and half-timbering on the upper stories. The projecting wings each join the central four-story mass at an obtuse angle with a four-story, cross-gabled projecting bay that houses the building's two primary elevator and stairway towers. Both of these cross-gable bays are surmounted on the north face of the roof by a hexagonal penthouse that houses the elevator head and stairwell. The roofline at the center massing features false hipped roofs with slate shingles and rounded dormer windows with metal casement windows.

The primary south facade of the 1930 building is divided into three distinct sections—the south elevation of the main block with center massing flanked by the four-story cross-gabled bays, and the two courtyard-facing elevations of the projecting end bays that extend at an angle from the southeast and southwest of the main block. The center massing faces directly south onto the courtyard over a projecting one-story entrance pavilion, which extends south between the two cross-gable stair towers that separate the center massing from the three-story wings. The symmetrical pavilion has a central projecting vestibule and pointed-arch stone entrance surround flanked by three pointed-arch, steel-frame, leaded, casement windows on either side. There are no exterior doors in the door opening. Brick buttresses between the windows and at the corners of the vestibule, limestone pointed-arches, a carved shield above the doorway, and crenelated limestone parapet present the entrance pavilion in the Gothic Revival style. The second story of the central mass partially extends over the entrance pavilion. The section is clad in reddish yellow brick, features four evenly-spaced pairs of double-hung sash windows, and is capped by a heavy crenellated limestone parapet and a decorative wrought iron railing for a third-floor outdoor space. The third story of the center massing is clad in brick and houses five evenly-spaced pairs of non-historic windows. The fourth story features a false hipped roof with slate shingles and five rounded dormer windows with metal casement windows.

The projecting bays that connect the center massing to the two wings feature steeply pitched cross gables with wood and stucco half timbering at the third and fourth floors and original casement windows at the fourth floor. The base of the half-timbered section is supported by paired wooden brackets that suggest the jetty overhangs in more rustic examples of the Tudor Revival style. Smaller half-timbered shed dormers extend from both sides of these cross gables. The two polygonal stair towers project well above the main roofline and feature crenelated parapets with limestone caps.

The courtyard-facing elevations of the projecting wings are identical, seven bays long and regularly fenestrated primarily with pairs of non-historic vinyl windows. All floors are clad in brick except for the top floor, which is covered in stucco and outlined with timber detail, giving the impression of a half-timbered attic. A slate hip roof caps the wings and obscures the parapet and flat roof beyond. On each wing, a projecting central brick bay that rises past the hip roof and terminates with a crenelated brick parapet.

The end walls and north-facing elevations of both projecting wings continue the materials and detailing of the courtyard-facing elevations, with brick on the lower stories and half-timbering on the third story. A wide projecting brick bay with narrow stepped window openings and a crenelated parapet houses the primary stairs in the wings. A single door with rusticated stone detailing around the opening provides access to the stairs. The north elevation of each wing has eight bays with two center bays that project above the first

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floor, are clad in stucco and timber detailing, and are capped by a cross gable roof.

The east elevation of the center massing of the 1930 building is clearly visible and connects at the north end to the 1955 addition. This elevation is clad in brick on all four stories and is much less ornamented than the primary south elevation. The first story houses three identical openings with soldier course brick lintels topped with a stone label mold. The center opening houses wood and glass double doors with transom above. The two flanking openings house multi-lite steel sash windows that have been boarded over from the exterior. The upper stories of this elevation are regularly fenestrated with single window openings with non-historic vinyl windows. The parapet above the fourth story continues the simple crenellation pattern of the projecting elevator and stair penthouse towers. The west elevation of the main massing is similar, but the lower portion is obscured by the one-story chapel block that was constructed in 1955 as part of the first expansion of the retirement home.

*1955/1965 Additions*

The post-war additions constructed on the north side of the 1930 building together form a unified block that is similar in overall plan and massing to the original building, with a splayed U-shaped plan formed by a center massing and two large flanking wings. The center massing and northeast wing were constructed in 1955; the northwest wing was completed in 1965. The exterior of the 1955 and 1965 additions maintain a consistent simple profile and a refined use of materials. Coursed ashlar covers the walls of the first floor, while multi-tonal yellow and brown brick similar to the 1930 building clads the upper floors; a simple limestone parapet caps the building. The roof on both additions is flat with a limestone parapet. A rectangular brick penthouse is located on the roof at the middle of the center massing. The northwest wing is topped by an enclosed sixth-floor observation deck, which is clad in brick with wide walls of glass, and is topped by a concrete canopy.

The center of the primary north elevation of the 1955/65 addition houses the main north entrance to the building—a pair of white metal and glass doors set in a slightly projecting, polished dark gray granite surround. Large plate glass windows framed by polished granite flank the main entrance and extend east and west along the first floor to the first bay of each projecting wing, marking the location of the north lobby. A semi-circular driveway is situated in front of the main entrance, and a large, distinctively mid-century concrete and metal canopy extends from the main entrance over the driveway. A secondary entrance is located at the center of the north elevation of the projecting east wing, giving access to the east interior stair. This entrance features wood and glass double-doors flanked by sidelights and topped with large transoms. A one-story enclosure with ashlar stone walls and flat roof with rounded fascia houses a raised loading entrance with a rolling garage door.

The first floor windows on the projecting wings of the 1955/1965 addition are primarily large plate glass windows with metal framing and pairs of operable hoppers at their bases. All elevations are regularly fenestrated on the upper floors with pairs of one-over-one double-hung sash windows—non-historic vinyl windows on the second and third floors and historic wood windows on the fourth and fifth floors—all with brick headers and stone sills.

The single-story chapel addition, extends from the western side of the building, fronting onto a small paved parking lot. The chapel addition is clad in coursed ashlar with a plain limestone parapet. Four evenly-spaced tall window openings with original glass block windows fenestrate the west elevation. A single doorway with a solid panel wood door is located within the southernmost window opening on this elevation. The window openings are divided by projecting limestone mullions and are capped by a limestone shelf.

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## Interior

The interior layout of the Baptist Retirement Home is primarily defined on the ground floor by large meeting spaces—including lobbies, a chapel, and a dining room—and on upper floors by lateral corridors lined by single-occupant rooms. Each section of the building, the south half completed in 1930 and the north half completed in 1955 and 1965, features a central main entrance. In each section, the main entrance opens into a central lobby with stair and elevator access to each level of the connecting wings. Many of the original partition walls on the ground floor and all of the partition walls on the second and third floors were removed by the prior owner in 2012 as part of a failed renovation effort. Portions of the third floor of the southwest wing in the 1930 building were damaged by fire in 2012 and the roof on that wing has collapsed. The description below describes the interiors in their current condition, followed by a separate section on alterations and integrity.

### *1930 Building*

The main entrance to the 1930 building is set in a single-story entrance pavilion that faces south onto the original courtyard. The large exterior doorway opens into a small vestibule with textured plaster walls, which leads through an interior doorway with an ornamental plaster surrounds on both sides and into the long and narrow main entrance lobby. The lobby runs the length of the entrance pavilion and is illuminated by the pavilion's six sets of pointed arch, leaded glass metal casement windows. Although the windows are extant, they are in poor condition. The interior of the openings are cased with stained wood. The space is intact with historic detailing but is covered with construction debris. Three large openings on the north wall of the lobby—a central opening cased with dark stained wood and two flanking openings with simple plaster returns—lead to the large dining room space, while two stairways that bookend the lobby access the upper floors of the building's southeast and southwest wings. The wrought iron railing remains on the east stair, but the railing on the west stair is missing and portions of the plaster walls have collapsed. The lobby features floors covered in a mosaic of beige, tan, terra cotta, and dark brown tile with a terrazzo border, walls of textured plaster, and a plaster ceiling visually supported by decorative dark-stained wood box beams braced on foliate carved wood corbels. An original hexagonal, wrought-iron, flush-mount light with wavy amber glass remains.

Beyond the lobby is the building's central dining room, a large open space that occupies most of the first floor in the 1930 building's center massing. Along the east wall, a double doorway, flanked by rectangular metal casement windows, leads outside to 3rd Avenue. A set of three doorways along the west wall connect the common space to the adjoining chapel addition. Most of the plaster ceilings have been removed to expose the ceiling structure above, the flooring is now unfinished concrete, and the walls delineating the smaller inset dining area on the south end of the space have been removed to expose the concrete structural beams. On the south wall of the dining room between the three large openings to the lobby, inset bookcase niches remain intact. Portion of the decorative plaster along the beams and columns also remain.

Short flights of stairs at each end of the main lobby lead to smaller elevator lobbies that access the spaces in the projecting wings of the 1930 building. Each wing is connected to the center massing by a stair and elevator tower. A single elevator and winding steel pan staircase with terrazzo treads provide access to each floor. Elevator lobbies on each floor are connected through the central portion of the building by a corridor with units on either side. On the second floor, the units were extended south in an addition over the entrance pavilion, which was likely completed at the same time as the 1955 or 1965 additions. Units that originally faced north were reconfigured following the construction of the north half of the complex in 1955 and 1965. The configuration of the corridor and units on the third floors retains the layout as reorganized in 1965.

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The first and second floors of both wings in the 1930 building have been gutted and are now open and free of partitions, while the third floor of the southwest wing retains its original layout and finishes, with a central double-loaded corridor and small residential units on each side. Five units line the west side of the wing and four units line the east or courtyard side of the wing. All units feature a small closet and a bathroom. Spaces are finished with plaster over wire lath, doors are outlined with plain dark-stained trim, and metal casement windows are set in smooth plaster recesses without wood trim. The third floor of the southeast wing is fire damaged and further compromised by a roof collapse; no salvageable historic fabric remains in this portion of the 1930 building.

#### *1955/1965 Additions*

The north half of the complex completed in 1955 and 1965 is similar in layout to the original south half from 1930. A central entrance from the north courtyard opens into a main lobby space with a bank of two elevators and a stairwell across from the entrance, and corridors leading to the northeast and northwest wings. Original terrazzo flooring remains along the north end of the first floor. A secondary elevator and stairwell at the center of the northwest wing serve all floors including the rooftop observation room. On the ground floor, a corridor beside the stairwell leads to a secondary entrance along the west elevation. Similarly, the northeast wing has a secondary elevator and stairwell that are closer to the northern end of the wing. Secondary entrances on both the courtyard side and along the east elevation lead to the elevator and stairwell. Finally, the chapel addition is accessed by a doorway in the southwest corner of the lobby. The space features a plaster proscenium and a raised stage area with wood paneled fascia at the south end of the room. A wall of glass block windows along the west illuminates the space. The floors are bare concrete and the ceiling structure is exposed, although ghosting on the walls and columns indicate the original ceiling height.

The upper floors of the 1955 and 1965 section were designed with similar layouts on each floor. The first, second, and third floors have been largely gutted and are open with no partitions and few original finishes, while the fourth and fifth floors are intact with their original double-loaded corridors and finishes. The flooring in the corridors is linoleum tile; ceilings are acoustical tile. In the northwest wing, the fourth and fifth floors house ten units per floor, each with closets and separate bathrooms. In the northeast wing on the fourth and fifth floors there are twelve units with shared toilets for every two units. An additional six units line the north side of the central corridor on each floor. All rooms are finished with smooth plaster and vinyl tile flooring. Units have solid core doors set in steel jambs with and transoms above.

At the top of the northwest wing is an observation room/sunroom offering views of the property and the surrounding neighborhood. An elevator and stairwell occupy the northwest corner of the otherwise unobstructed floor. Exterior doors in the east and south walls lead out onto an open roof deck space. The main room is finished with vinyl tile floors, smooth plaster walls, and an acoustic tile ceiling.

#### **Post-1965 Alterations**

Most of the significant alterations to the building occurred as part of the 2012 failed renovations that were initiated by the previous owner.

#### *Exterior*

On the exterior, the majority of the original casement windows on the 1930 building were removed and replaced with vinyl windows. The historic doors at the main south entrance were removed, as well as the

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secondary entrance doors at the end walls of the two projecting wings.

The one-over-one wood windows on the second and third floors of the 1955/1965 addition were also removed and replaced with vinyl windows.

The roof on the southeast wing of the 1930 building was also destroyed by fire in 2012.

### *Interior*

The interior of the building was more substantially altered during the previous renovation efforts. On the first floor of the 1930 building, the double-loaded corridor and residential units were completely removed. Portions of walls between the lobby and dining room were removed, as well as the existing finished flooring, ceiling, and wall finishes in the dining room.

The main lobby in the 1955/1965 addition has been stripped of its wall finishes and finished ceilings but retains its open layout and terrazzo flooring. The kitchen and services spaces on the first floor of the northeast wing and small secondary spaces in the northwest wing have been removed. The original stair with wood and glass vestibule and exterior doors remain at the stair in the northeast wing and a smaller secondary stair remains in the northwest wing.

On the upper floors, all the partition walls and finishes on the second and third floors, which housed double-loaded corridors with residential units on each side, have been removed or are in such deteriorated and fragmentary condition that they are not salvageable.

Demolition plans from the 2012 failed rehabilitation project are enclosed, which show the walls that were removed on the first floor, second floor, and third floor. Although these demo plans also showed removal of all of the interior spaces on the fourth and fifth floors, the 2012 fire in the 1930 building's third floor halted demolition, and the building was sold before any more demolition work was completed.

### **Integrity Statement**

The exterior of the Baptist Retirement Home retains a high degree of architectural integrity and continues to reflect its significance under Criterion C as an important example of Tudor Revival architecture and Criterion A as the only known Baptist Retirement Home in Illinois. Architecturally, the Baptist Retirement Home is the best example of a large-scale Tudor Revival building in Maywood or in any of the surrounding suburbs. Because it was most popular as a residential style, the Tudor Revival style was utilized for the Baptist Retirement Home to add a sense of hominess and domesticity to what was essentially an institutional building. The 1955-65 additions, while large, were architect-designed and attached in such a way as to leave the vast majority of the 1930 exterior exposed and intact.

### *Exterior*

Changes to the 1930 building exterior are minor, with no major non-historic additions or alterations that would significantly affect the building's integrity. Historic windows remain at the entrance pavilion and along the fourth floor. All of the remaining windows in the 1930 building are non-historic replacements within the original openings. Some window openings have been infilled with masonry, but the infill is set back within the original opening and the stone sills are intact. The infill could easily be removed and new windows installed to restore the original openings.



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The 1955/1965 five-story addition to the Baptist Retirement Home, although large, was constructed on the north end of the 1930 building, leaving most of the original building intact and visible. The addition retains its splayed-U plan with central massing and projecting wings. The exterior cladding is intact, with coursed ashlar stone at the first floor multi-tonal yellow and brown brick on the upper floors. The single-story chapel addition extends from the western side and retains its original glass block windows. The primary entrance along center of the north elevation retains its original large metal canopy with double butterfly roof. The black stone entrance surround is intact and visible from the interior. The original large plate glass windows at the ground floor lobby of the addition are intact but covered by plywood on the exterior. The openings are framed by black stone that matches the entrance surround. The secondary entrance on the east side of the building also retains its original metal canopy.

The windows throughout the rest of the addition are replacement 1/1 sash within the original openings on the lower floors – the fourth and fifth floors of the addition retain their original wood 1/1 sash.

*Interior*

Despite the demolition of secondary spaces on the first floor and removal of the interior partition walls and finishes on the second and third floors (undertaken by the previous owner in 2012), the Baptist Retirement Home retains the layout and many original finishes in the primary public spaces, including the 1930 and 1955/65 main lobbies, the main dining room and the chapel block. Representative examples of 1930 and 1955/65 corridors also remain on the fourth and fifth floors, showing the simple, utilitarian nature of these spaces. The demolition plans from the previous owner show that all the upper floors were identical in terms of their layout. Given the size of the building (over 132,000 square feet), these alterations, though extensive, enough of the historic interior fabric remains to allow for a thorough understanding of the building's original function and to convey its significance.

The 1930 south lobby, the only interior space with Tudor Revival detailing, is in poor condition but is intact. The existing plaster walls are largely intact with limited areas of severe damage. The space retains its original plaster ceiling with ornamented wood beams and original mosaic tile flooring. The plaster label mold detailing around the main entrance opening is intact. The large cased openings that connect the lobby to the adjacent dining room space are intact. At the east and west ends of the lobby, short flights of steps with metal railings lead to the two main stair towers. The stairs, which wind around an elevator core in each tower, are intact on all floors. The elevator doors remain on all floors as well.

Moving north from the south lobby, the first floor opens up to a large space that was historically the building's dining room. A c.1960 photograph shows the dining room as a large open space with concrete ceiling beams covered with simple molded plaster detailing and vinyl tile flooring. Although fragmentary, portions of the original plaster still exist on the dining room.

The chapel block at the west end of the 1955/65 addition retains its original volume and most finishes. The stage on the south wall of the space is intact, and the room connecting the chapel block to the dining room is intact and retains original folding partition screens and blond wood doors.

Both the interior and exterior of the building retain sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as a regional health facility and retirement home during the 20th century.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | B removed from its original location.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | C a birthplace or grave.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | D a cemetery.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | F a commemorative property.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years. |

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1929 - 1965

**Significant Dates**

1929

1954

1965

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation** (if applicable)

**Architect/Builder**

Roberts, Elmer Clifford

Weber, Bertram Anton

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Baptist Retirement Home is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for Social History and National Register Criterion C for Architecture. The building served as one of only two retirement homes in Maywood and one of only a handful of retirement homes in the west Chicago suburbs built during the early to mid-twentieth centuries. Built to provide modern and comfortable accommodations for elderly Baptists from Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, the Baptist Retirement Home (originally known as the Baptist Old People's Home and later as the Baptist Home and Hospital) reflected shifting ideas and strategies for the care of the elderly during the late nineteenth and early-to-middle twentieth century.

Architecturally, the building is a large and impressive example of a Tudor Revival-style institutional building designed by Elmer C. Roberts, who had recently taken over design responsibilities from his father, E.E. Roberts. The half timbering on the upper floors, crenelated polygonal stairs towers, steeply pitched cross gables, slate roofs, and multi-paned steel casement windows flanking the main entrance are all indicative of the style. On the interior, the main entrance lobby also features many typical Tudor Revival details, including mosaic tile floor, heavy wood beams, textured plaster walls, and wrought iron railings at the flanking stairs. The 1955 and 1965 additions that extend north of the main building are thoughtfully designed modern institutional structures that were completed within the period of significance and contribute to the significance of the property.

The Baptist Retirement Home also meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious property that has significance due to its architecture and its place in the social history of elder care. Built in stages, the building's original 1929-1930 section is a fine Tudor Revival-style institutional building. Its later 1955 and 1965 portions, which exemplify the modernist architectural trends of the post-World War II era, are representative of important changes occurring in long-term care of the elderly.

The period of significance for the building begins in 1929, when the Tudor Revival main building was constructed, and ends in 1965, when the last major addition to the building was completed. Despite demolition of some of the interior spaces by the previous owner in 2012 and fire damage that also dates to 2012, the exterior of the building retains a high degree of integrity and the building as a whole retains sufficient historic fabric to convey its significance within the context of Maywood.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**The Care of the Elderly in United States History and the Development of Retirement Homes in the Early Twentieth Century<sup>i</sup>**

Throughout the history of the United States, various ways of caring for the elderly have been tried. Early on, during colonial times and the early nineteenth century, old people were typically taken care of by family members, most often their children. Small-town and rural living was relatively inexpensive, homes in such places typically had room to accommodate extended-family members, and best care was provided by families caring for their own members.

Without family, the elderly with wealth paid for families to care for them. Without either family or means, older people had to make do with poorhouses or almshouses. These institutions were seen as a last resort for the indigent

<sup>i</sup> Unless otherwise cited, information in this section is from "History of Long Term Care," Elder Web; <https://www.elderweb.com/book-page/history-long-term-care/>, accessed May 13, 2017, and *Homes for the Aged in the United States*.

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elderly. Almshouses traditionally were the means of caring for the destitute of all ages, and impoverished seniors were thrown together with all sorts of people marginalized by society, including orphans, the mentally ill, and the simply destitute. Such institutions were built and maintained by a variety of government jurisdictions, including cities, counties and states. Some states avoided the cost and expense of poorhouses by paying citizens to provide room and board for paupers, but most provided for the indigent elderly through institutional care.

Poorhouses typically provided minimal accommodations, as there was a concern that they would be overrun with residents if life in them was made too pleasant. Often, residents wore uniforms rather than their own clothes, they were forbidden to leave the poorhouses, and they were expected to work in attached farms or at tasks necessary to the running of the poorhouse.

The nineteenth century saw changes in American society that placed greater pressure on the elderly to cope. Families often no longer stayed in the same geographic area, reducing the ability of children to take care of parents and other older relatives. Urbanization created greater living expenses and smaller homes, making caring for the elderly within one's family more difficult. In turn, this placed more pressure on poorhouses, and governments increasingly complained of the costs associated with them. Besides, social reformers believed that America could do better by its "deserving poor," including the elderly.

As a result, non-profit "old age homes" began to be established during the mid- to late-1800s. They were seen as places for "respectable" poor people to live. Benevolent societies and fraternal organizations were created to provide services for a wide range of ethnic, religious, and trade groups, and group homes for the elderly were often among the facilities that these non-profits established. They were "voluntary" organizations because eligible people could choose whether or not to join. Also, since these were private, not government, organizations, restrictions based on race, religion and ethnicity typically determined who could become members, rather than geographic propinquity. Monthly dues were paid throughout one's working life with the expectation of receiving services as needed, including a home in old age. Government monies played little or no role in these institutions.

By the early twentieth century, hundreds of such private homes for the elderly were being established and existing ones expanded to meet the needs of specific groups. They were being built in cities, suburbs and small towns across the United States. Often, these homes were founded in already-existing houses repurposed for their new institutional use. As they grew, old people's homes then built larger, more institutional buildings often set on large landscaped properties.

The 1930s, the onslaught of the Great Depression, and the response of the federal government through New Deal programs changed American elder care profoundly. *Homes for the Aged in the United States*, Bulletin No. 677 published in 1941 by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides a succinct overview of the changing landscape of institutional care for old people. It notes that, at that time, the newly established federal Social Security benefit for the elderly increasingly made it possible for them to remain in their homes or to contribute financially if living with a relative. Existing retirement homes could provide greater services and more gracious living for their residents, given their greater financial resources. Such homes began to be more of a choice, rather than a last hope. *Homes for the Aged* notes:

*... Such homes are distinguished from the almshouses by the fact that they represent private philanthropy [in which the resident may be or have been a contributor] as contrasted with public charity . . . Not only does no social stigma attach to residence in an old people's home, but such is the extent of public*

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*acceptance that a large proportion of such homes actually contain one or more guests who are financially able to maintain themselves elsewhere but prefer the care and companionship available in the home.<sup>ii</sup>*

As of 1939, the date of the statistics gathered for *Homes for the Aged in the United States*, over 100,000 elderly people lived in 1,428 homes identified by the study that were scattered throughout the United States. 82 of these homes were located in Illinois, while 5 were located in the western suburbs of Cook County. The majority of these homes were small (housing 50 persons or less) and many had been constructed before 1910.

The means by which retirement homes were established and managed during the early twentieth century differed. Almost 65 percent of the homes required some contribution from the resident, either as a flat entrance fee or through specified weekly or monthly rates. Most retirement homes had sponsoring organizations that provided support from the outside. Many were founded and maintained by religious denominations such as Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, or Baptists. Others provided homes for members of fraternal organizations. Labor organizations also increasingly funded retirement homes for their members, while some companies did the same for long-time employees. Some homes were restricted to specific nationalities, such as Germans, English, or Scandinavian. Because of racial divisions, African American-owned and operated retirement homes were increasingly found in northern cities such as Chicago, growing from 9 reported in the 1929 federal report to 50 in 1941.<sup>iii</sup>

The 1941 *Homes for Aged in the United States* noted that cooperative old-people's homes had been newly established in the recent past, where like-minded people living on public old-age assistance such as Social Security had "clubbed together to run houses where they provide themselves with rooms and meals on a cooperative basis."<sup>iv</sup> The federal report notes that retirement homes without membership requirements were rare, "In general, however, the homes are provided for specific groups—members of a specified organization (fraternal, religious, labor, etc.), nationality or race, relatives of a given group (as relatives of marines, soldiers, or sailors), or residents of a given locality."<sup>v</sup>

In the post-World War II era, new institutions for the ailing elderly, the precursor to today's skilled-nursing facilities, began to provide help for those with chronic illnesses, especially those of old age, and they joined earlier retirement homes that focused on the still-able elderly, operating much like today's assisted-living homes. "Nursing homes" began to be found throughout the United States, and existing old people's homes began adding skilled-nursing wings and services. The Hospital Survey and Construction Act of 1946 (commonly known as the Hill-Burton Act) provided a mechanism for financing the construction and modernization of hospitals, as well as construction standards. This federal act provided a model for later federal and state standards for nursing home construction. Also, in the wake of Hill-Burton, many older, "obsolete" hospital buildings during this period were converted to nursing homes. In 1956, changes to the Social Security Act created a new program providing funding for nursing home services, while federal grants to states providing public assistance for the elderly increased. Late 1950s legislation allowed the Small Business and Federal Housing administrations (SBA and FHA) to provide help in financing the construction and operation of both nursing homes and non-profit housing for the elderly. In addition, in 1959 Congress authorized greater monies for health care for the elderly of modest means. Finally, in 1965, both Medicare and Medicaid were established, with the former paying for post-hospital rehabilitation in nursing homes and the latter providing skilled-nursing care for the indigent poor.

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<sup>ii</sup> *Homes for the Aged in the United States*, p.2.

<sup>iii</sup> Statistics for hundreds of American retirement homes in 1939, the date of statistics gathering for this publication, can be found in *Homes for Aged in the United States*. Bulletin No. 677 published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>iv</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>v</sup> *Ibid.*

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## The History of Maywood and the Founding of the Baptist Old People's Home

The Village of Maywood lies on the west bank of the Des Plaines River, 11 miles west of downtown Chicago. Maywood was first established in 1869, when a group of Vermont businessmen led by William T. Nichols purchased and subdivided a long and narrow strip of land along the Des Plaines to form "a neat, desirable suburb." The Maywood Company (named after Nichol's daughter, May) laid out wide streets, planted 20,000 trees, established a school and park, and constructed a hotel, a railroad depot, and a post office.<sup>vi</sup> The Company also set aside four blocks for church purposes.

The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 brought an influx of new residents into the area, and over 100 homes were constructed in Maywood that year. The financial panic of 1873 slowed the pace of growth somewhat, but by 1881, Maywood had incorporated as a village with over 1,000 residents. The Maywood Company branched into light industry in 1884, when it constructed a manufacturing facility for Chicago Scraper and Ditcher, a manufacturer of agricultural machinery. The following year, the Norton Can Works moved its operations to Maywood. By 1901, Norton Can had merge with other smaller manufacturers to form the American Can Company, which would remain the primary economic engine and employer for Maywood until the 1970s.

By the turn of the century, Maywood boasted 4,532 residents. Excellent transportation lines, including the Chicago and North Western Railroad, the Chicago and Great Western Railroad, and the Aurora, Elgin and Chicago electric line that connected to Chicago's elevated railways system, helped the village to expand steadily through the World War I years. During the 1920s, a period of great economic expansion, population growth in Chicago and surrounding communities accelerated, and Maywood was no exception. Between 1920 and 1930, the village's population more than doubled, from 12,072 to nearly 26,000.

Around the turn-of-the-twentieth-century, Maywood's reputation as a well-to-do residential district with "well-planned, beautiful tree-lined streets" bordering the Des Plaines River helped to attract the attention of a group of Chicago Baptist ministers who were scouting locations for a proposed home for aged Baptists.<sup>vii</sup> At the Chicago Baptist Ministers Convention on November 5, 1906, a resolution was passed that authorized the incorporation of the Baptist Old People's Home (the Baptist Retirement Home's original name) in Maywood. The charter was granted on June 13, 1907, and the Home purchased almost an entire city block bounded by Randolph Street, South 3rd Avenue, Pine Street, and South 4th Avenue (totaling 13 lots) in the heart of Maywood. An existing wood-frame house on the block served as the first building of the Home. It was remodeled at a cost of \$2,000 and opened its doors on May 1, 1909, to just seven residents.<sup>viii</sup> In the May 14, 1910, edition of *The Standard*, conference leaders urged Baptists across the Midwest to assist in establishing and expanding the new institution:

*[The Home] has a \$4,000 endowment but relies for its support upon the faith, prayers, and offerings of churches and friends of aged people...Its needs are gifts to pay off the mortgage of \$3,800; another cottage for the many applicants for whom there are no rooms; \$10,000 would build it. This is the only home for aged Baptists in the western states and the demands require a large plant. Baptists should place this home in their prayers, gifts, and will....The field of the home includes the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, and Michigan...Every state should erect a cottage on these ground in the coming year.*<sup>ix</sup>

<sup>vi</sup>"Maywood" Encyclopedia of Chicago, accessed March 6, 2016.

The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, "Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, Based on the 1970 and 1980 Censuses." P. 257.

<sup>vii</sup> Community Fact Book, 257.

<sup>viii</sup> Perry J. Stackhouse, *Chicago and the Baptists: A Century of Progress*, p. 224.

<sup>ix</sup> The *Standard*, May 14, 1910

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The First Baptist Church of Maywood, chartered in 1875 as one of the new village's earliest churches, was an important supporter of the Baptist Retirement Home.

**The Development of the Baptist Retirement Home (1910-1965)**

Through its early years, the Baptist Retirement Home's growth, as the Baptist Old People's Home, was due to charitable donations from Baptist churches and individuals, as well as contributions made by residents themselves both at the time of admission and throughout their occupancy. The need for a larger facility for the Baptist Old People's Home was realized from the beginning, but needed to wait until sufficient contributions for the Home's building fund were realized. In 1914, the Home built a new 3-story brick building, known as the Aunt Lizzie Aiken Memorial Building, at the northwest corner of the Home's property, at South 4th Avenue and Randolph Street, which provided room for 41 new residents. This followed a year later with the purchase of one of the remaining houses on the Home's city block and the building's conversion to Home use. These three buildings, the two houses and the larger Aiken Memorial Building, comprised the Home's facilities until the construction of a much larger retirement home in 1929-1930 (the original portion of the current building).<sup>x</sup>

*Chicago and the Baptists: A Century of Progress* notes, "The Home had established an excellent reputation and it was not long before there was another waiting list and again the challenge of human need was accepted."<sup>xi</sup> As early as 1925, the Baptist Old Peoples' Home was actively seeking money for a new building. The Home's annual report that year documents the active solicitation of funds for this expansion.<sup>xii</sup> By July 1928, an announcement of a new 4-story building for the Home was published in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. The accompanying drawing showed an impressive U-shaped building in the Tudor Revival architectural style.<sup>xiii</sup>

The construction of this new building was delayed about a year, however, due to zoning issues with the City of Maywood, and groundbreaking did not occur until June 23, 1929.<sup>xiv</sup> Construction was complete by late spring 1930, with the *Maywood Herald* featuring the almost-finished building on the cover of its April 3, issue.<sup>xv</sup>

Within the context of its neighborhood, the new Baptist Old People's Home building was a large-scale institutional building, impressive in size and architectural style. Facing south towards Pine Street, the building had a central pavilion containing common areas and two flanking wings with residents' rooms. The wings flank a curved driveway allowing vehicular access from Pine. Sheltered amidst trees, shrubbery, and flowers, the new Home building was designed to resemble a fine apartment building or resort hotel, bringing architectural dignity and style to a building type—a retirement home—often modest and plain in overall appearance. The Baptist Old Peoples' Home retained the older Aunt Lizzie Aiken Memorial Building, which became a small wing at the northwest corner of the new building, and one of the early, small-scale houses also remained standing, but the 1929-1930 building was now the public face of the institution.

Inside, the new building contained many amenities for the residents of the Baptist Old People's Home. A first-floor dining room provided a pleasant, dignified setting for meals. Rooms in the wings, which were angled to optimally catch sunlight, were generously scaled and bright with light. Hospital facilities on the building's fourth floor provided care for residents in need of it.

<sup>x</sup> Stackhouse, *Chicago and the Baptists*, p. 224; *Baptist Old People's Home, Maywood, Ill.: Yearbook*, 1925, p. 6.

<sup>xi</sup> Stackhouse, *Chicago and the Baptists*, p. 224.

<sup>xii</sup> *Baptist Old People's Home, Maywood, Ill.: Yearbook*, 1925.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 8, 1928.

<sup>xiv</sup> "Baptist Home Hearing," *Maywood Herald*, June 13, 1929; "Baptists Break Ground," *Maywood Herald*, June 27, 1929.

<sup>xv</sup> *Maywood Herald*, April 3, 1930.



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From the beginning, the Baptist Old People's Home (later the Baptist Retirement Home) was selective in who they accepted as residents. *Homes for Aged in the United States* provided information not just about American retirement homes in general, but specific information about individual homes, including the Baptist home in Maywood. It noted that the minimum age for admission was 70 years of age, and that a new resident needed \$750 as a minimum entrance fee for life membership. Other requirements were that residents be white, of the Baptist faith, and English-speaking. They also needed to be of "good character" and possessing "normal health." Both individuals and couples were accepted. All property held by a new resident was required to be transferred to the Home upon admission.<sup>xvi</sup> As already noted, such restrictions were typical of most retirement homes of the early twentieth century.

The Baptist Old People's Home opened its new building in 1930, just as the United States was sinking into economic depression. However, its financial support from Baptist churches and individuals was strong enough to weather the financial storm of the 1930s. This was unlike many other retirement homes with less substantial financial support. The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted in 1941 that 115 retirement homes, or 8 percent of all such institutions in the United States in operation in 1929, had closed their doors by 1939.<sup>xvii</sup> One of these closed retirement homes, the Baptist Ministers' Home in Fenton, Michigan, was a sister facility to the Maywood home. Established in 1888 by the Baptist Ministers Aid Society of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin, this home housed 13 residents in 1933 when it was closed. All but one of its residents moved to the Baptist Old People's Home in Maywood. (The one remaining member moved to the Baptist Old People's Home in Fairport, New York.)<sup>xviii</sup> Residents of the Fenton, Michigan, home noted that they had "pleasant memories of the old Home, but the new Home [in Maywood] was well equipped, groups from Chicago churches did much to make life pleasant for Maywood Home residents, and those in charge of the Home did all in their power to make life pleasant for the new members of their Family."<sup>xix</sup>

Through the 1930s and 1940s, Chicago and Maywood newspapers and publications published occasional articles about the Baptist Old People's Home and its residents. In 1932 and 1933, an elderly woman of Eskimo ethnicity living at the Home was featured in both the *Chicago Daily Tribune* and the *Maywood Herald*. Her childhood with her community in Greenland, her subsequent life in Iceland, Canada and the United States, her employment as a servant, and her time spent as a Baptist lecturer were noted.<sup>xx</sup>

In 1938, Maywood published a town history in celebration of its 70th anniversary of establishment. This "Festival of Progress" history noted the Baptist Old Peoples' Home as one of the town's institutions, noting: "It is a beautiful place in which an old person may spend the last few years of life in congenial surroundings and be wholly without care. A well-equipped hospital with a staff of eight nurses cares for the sick and the infirm."<sup>xxi</sup> The 125 people then in residence "have all the freedom of a private residence. The management endeavors to foster a real family life in the Home and an earnest endeavor has always been made to avoid an institutional atmosphere."<sup>xxii</sup>

In 1945, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* had an extensive article touting the "Joys of Fellowship at Life's Dusk" felt by residents of the Baptist Old Peoples' Home. The article note, "So much does the building at 315 Pine St., Maywood, resemble a great apartment hotel that home-hunting strangers in the suburb frequently have gone as far as the structure's entrance before discovering their mistake. The lettering above the doorway reads, 'Baptist

<sup>xvi</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Homes for Aged in the United States*. Bulletin No. 677, pp. 38-39.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xviii</sup> Joseph W. Priest, comp. *History of the Baptist Ministers Aid Society of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin*, pp. 4, 13.

<sup>xix</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>xx</sup> "Eskimo Woman is Looking at Life in Baptist Home," *Herald* (Maywood, Illinois), July 29, 1932; Katherine Kelley, "Pulpit Veterans and Wives Move to De Luxe Home," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 23, 1933.

<sup>xxi</sup> *Maywood's Seventieth Festival of Progress, September 23-October 1, 1938*, p. 40.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid.

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Old Peoples' Home'." The article goes on to note the attractiveness of the property as "one of the beauty spots of Maywood" with its spacious and well-landscaped grounds, which provide residents "an opportunity for outdoor recreation." The rooms in the Home's building "of old English architecture" were noted for their "ample air and light."<sup>xxiii</sup>

In the same article, the writer noted that the current number of Baptist Home residents was 145, all over 70, the Home's minimum age. Residents' average age was 83 and that a dozen were over 90. Many residents were former Baptist ministers and missionaries. All were from the Chicago area and the rest of Illinois, plus Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.<sup>xxiv</sup>

The article went on to note that, although the overall health of the Home's residents was good, there was increasingly a need for more medical care for chronic illnesses, causing an expansion of the Home's hospital facilities from the original fourth-floor facilities into the third floor as well. Forty-five residents were receiving such skilled-nursing care on that floor.<sup>xxv</sup>

The need for new space for the Baptist Old People's Home was noted in passing in the 1945 *Tribune* article, which stated that there were no vacancies in the Home.<sup>xxvi</sup> By the late 1940s, the Home began to consider expansion. The firm of E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts, Inc. of 201 N. Wells St., Chicago, was hired to design a new retirement home and hospital for a site near the 1929-1930 building, a square block at 1st Avenue and Washington Boulevard earlier occupied by the Baptist Children's Orphanage. Elmer C. Roberts had previously designed the 1929-1930 building, and preliminary design work for this project was completed by May, 1949.<sup>xxvii</sup> However, this completely separate building, eight stories at its highest, was never built.

Instead, the Baptist Home administration turned its focus to expanding the existing building. Roberts again was hired as architect, and he designed a five-story north-central and northeast addition that, for the time being, left the Aunt Lizzie Aitken Memorial Building intact as a northwest wing of the larger building. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* noted that "the addition will be of stone in a conservative modern style to harmonize with the original buff brick building."<sup>xxviii</sup> The estimated cost was \$750,000.<sup>xxix</sup>

Ground-breaking for the new addition occurred in March 1953 while construction started that summer. The new section of the renamed Baptist Home and Hospital added 94 new rooms for residents, an extension to the existing dining room, new first-floor lounges, and a 22-bed expansion of hospital facilities, as well as back-of-the-house spaces such as kitchen facilities and a "forced flow hot water" heating plant.<sup>xxx</sup> A fifth-floor "sun and fresh air porch" was also part of the expansion.<sup>xxxi</sup> It was noted that the home at that time had 143 residents and a staff of 50, including a resident physician.<sup>xxxii</sup> The dedication of the new north-central and northeast wing occurred on June 11, 1955. Over a thousand visitors from around the Midwest attended the dedication festivities for the building, noted as finally costing \$1,000,000 and housing a chapel and library, as well as other already noted

<sup>xxiii</sup> Oney Fred Sweet, "Here are Joys of Fellowship at Life's Dusk," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 21, 1945.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxvii</sup> "E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts, Inc.," Supplemental Data Sheet, Questionnaire for Architects' Roster, American Institute of Architects, dated May 25, 1949; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 13, 1949.

<sup>xxviii</sup> "Baptists Plan Extension of Maywood Home," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 2, 1953.

<sup>xxix</sup> "E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts, Inc.," Supplemental Information on Activities of this office filed with the American Institute of Architects, dated February 3, 1953.

<sup>xxx</sup> "Start to Build Baptist Home Annexes Soon," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 30, 1953.

<sup>xxxi</sup> "Baptists Plan Extension of Maywood Home," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 2, 1953.

<sup>xxxii</sup> "Start to Build Baptist Home Annexes Soon," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 30, 1953.

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facilities.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

In 1964, the yet-again-renamed Baptist Retirement Home announced the construction of a new northwest wing that would replace the 1914 Aunt Lizzie Aitken Memorial Building. Planned to cost \$1,200,000, this addition (to be known as the Mayfair wing) was five stories in height and planned to match the 1953-1955 addition in overall scale, design and materials. It was planned to have rooms for 229 residents. Elmer C. Roberts had retired by 1962, so the addition was designed by a different architect, Bertram A. Weber, whose office was at 228 N. LaSalle St., Chicago. A drawing published by the *Chicago Tribune* at this time showed the new wing was similar in overall scale and design to the existing 1953-1955 addition. It also noted that the home continued to be supported by "Baptist and others in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana."<sup>xxxiv</sup> This addition, the last to the Baptist Retirement Home, was completed in 1965.<sup>xxxv</sup> The home continued to operate for nearly forty years until closed its doors in 2002.

The Baptist Retirement Home was one of dozens of group homes for the elderly established by various philanthropic, religious, or fraternal organizations across the country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These homes were designed to provide permanent housing and care for the elderly members of a specified organization or residents of a specific locality. The rise in these types of group elderly homes was part of a larger trend in the United States that saw the evolution of the methods of caring for the elderly from family-oriented ways in eighteenth and early nineteenth century America to the creation of institutions. The Baptist Retirement Home exemplifies the early twentieth century model of a privately-built and -operated old people's home. When originally founded in 1907 as the Baptist Old People's Home, it like others, was located in an existing house. The construction of the much larger 1929-1930 building -- the oldest part of the existing building -- exemplifies this larger history of such homes for the elderly in the early twentieth century. Like others of its time, it was established by a non-for-profit group and catered to people of means, and as a private institution, it was able to place restrictions on who was eligible to reside there. The Baptist Retirement Home was unusual for its time compared to the majority of housing for the elderly -- in 1939 it had approximately 120 residents. This may be attributed to the fact that it was the only Baptist retirement facility in the region. The expansion of the home in 1955 and 1965 which also included an increase in the home's hospital and nursing facilities paralleled post-World War II federal laws aimed to provide financial aid and care for the elderly in need and fund the construction and modernization of nursing homes.

## Comparables

### Comparison of Retirement Homes in Illinois

The Baptist Retirement Home is significant for its history as a retirement home in the context of Maywood, a suburb west of Chicago within Cook County. It also is significant as a Tudor Revival-style residential institutional building with the same geographic context.

The Baptist Retirement Home, as a large-scale residential institutional building, is very unusual in the historic context of Maywood. The "Historic Resources of Maywood" Multiple Property Document, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, focuses on the city's single-family residences. In a single page, it notes that "Multifamily housing is not a prevailing building type in Maywood . . ."<sup>xxxvi</sup> It notes small-scale flat buildings, including two-flats, commercial/ residential buildings, and a scattering of courtyard and semi-courtyard buildings. No residential institutional buildings such as the Baptist Retirement Home are discussed.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> "Dedicate New Wing of Baptist Home, Hospital Tomorrow," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 10, 1955.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> "Baptists to Expand Home for Retirement," *Chicago Tribune*, October 11, 1964; "Elmer C. Roberts," *American Architects Directory*, 1962.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance map, 1983.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Susan Benjamin, "Historic Resources of Maywood," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Document, Sec. F II, p. 10.

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The building is one of only two historic retirement homes in Maywood, the other being the Maywood Home for Soldiers' Widows at 224 N. First Ave., constructed in 1924 as a two-story, red-brick Classical Revival-style building with a two-story wood portico. The Home for Soldiers' Widows has been determined eligible for National Register listing.

Other comparable retirement homes in nearby western Cook County suburbs that were identified in the 1941 *Homes for Aged in the United States* include:

- German Baptist Old People's Home (also known as Altenheim), 7824-26 Madison St., Forest Park; 277 residents; HARGIS Ref. # 154429, 157450, and 157451; 1971-75 IHSS
- British Old People's Home in Illinois, 8700 W. 31st St., Hollywood (now Brookfield); 75 residents; not listed in HARGIS
- Scottish Old People's Home, 28th and Des Plaines Ave., Riverside (now North Riverside); 69 residents; HARGIS Ref. # 801878; 1971-75 IHSS; Determined eligible for National Register listing<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Based on a review of HARGIS, there do not appear to be any other retirement homes listed in this database in the western Cook County suburbs.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Although not in or near the suburb of Maywood, two retirement homes in Chicago's Far Northwest Side Norwood Park neighborhood have contributing buildings to the Norwood Park Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002:

- Norwegian Old People's Home, 6016 N. Nina Ave.;
- Danish Old People's Home, 5656 N. Newcastle Ave.<sup>xxxix</sup>

There was another Baptist institution in Maywood, the Central Baptist Orphanage. Originally located in a house in Downers Grove, the orphanage received a change of name, to the Central Baptist Orphanage, in 1899, then the Central Baptist Children's Home in 1913. The institution soon outgrew its original Downers Grove home and moved to a larger house in Berwyn, then a still-larger home at 7629-31 S. Normal Ave. on Chicago's South Side. In 1904, the orphanage bought a large mansion from an early Maywood industrialist, Edwin Norton. Located on the northwest corner of First Avenue and Washington Boulevard in Maywood, this mansion became the orphanage's new home. Within a few years, the Central Baptist Orphanage was joined by the Baptist Old People's Home, located only a couple of blocks to the northeast. The Orphanage remained in Maywood until 1948, when it sold its property there and moved to Lake Villa. Its successor organization is known today as One Hope United - Northern Region. The Maywood orphanage has been demolished.

## **The Tudor Revival Architectural Style and its Institutional Use**

The Tudor Revival style of architecture is primarily a residential style, based on a variety of late Medieval and early Renaissance English models ranging "from thatch-roofed folk cottages to grand manors."<sup>xl</sup> The first Tudor Revival houses appeared in the United States in mid-1890s, but the style did not gain widespread popularity until the 1920s. Hallmarks of the style include half-timbering (stucco or brick panels outlined by wood boards), steeply pitched gable roofs, asymmetrical facades and narrow multi-paned windows. Because the style evoked associations with America's early English settlers, the Tudor Revival style remained second in popularity only to

<sup>xxxvii</sup> *Homes for Aged in the United States*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> HARGIS, <https://www.illinois.gov/ihpa/Preserve/Pages/HARGIS.aspx>; accessed August 2, 2016.

<sup>xxxix</sup> "Norwood Park Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2002.

<sup>xl</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 2013), 454.

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Colonial Revival for much of the early twentieth century. Wealthy families built large estate houses that mimicked the stately English manor house, and those of more modest means looked to the Cotswold cottage for inspiration. The style was also used for multi-residential buildings, including residential hotels that wanted to project a sense of gentility to entice residents. Such buildings, with their plethora of hotel services in support of long-term residential stays, had certain similarities with retirement homes of the twentieth century.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the Tudor Revival style also emerged as a uniformly popular style for commercial buildings in many suburban communities. The romantic "Old English" feel of the Tudor Revival style was seen as less severe and more attractive than the modern and straightforward Commercial Style that was used for many downtown buildings during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Typical examples are stone or brick with half-timbering, gabled dormers, and multi-paned windows on the upper floors.

Tudor Revival institutional buildings on the scale of the Baptist Retirement Home were also built in the early twentieth century. The style's associations with historic English residential architecture, including country houses, made it attractive for institutions attempting to impart a residential feeling for large group homes. Based on available information, including HARGIS, the Baptist Retirement Home appears to be an unusual use of the style for a large-scale residential institutional building in Maywood and neighboring western Cook County suburbs.<sup>xli</sup>

There do not appear to be any residential institutional buildings other than the Baptist Retirement Home that are designed in the Tudor Revival architectural style and located in Maywood or surrounding suburbs. The German Baptist Old People's Home (Altenheim) is designed in the German Gothic Revival style. The British Old People's Home is designed in a stripped down Classical style. The Scottish Old People's Home (now the Scottish Home) is designed in the Gothic Revival style with Gothic-style drip moldings and parapet crenellation. The Maywood Home for Soldier's Widows is a Classical Revival-style building. No Tudor Revival-style residential institutional buildings were found in a survey of HARGIS records, checking "Tudor Revival" against records in Maywood and surrounding suburbs.<sup>xlii</sup>

## **Architects Elmer C. Roberts and Bertram A. Weber**

**Elmer Clifford Roberts (1896-1981)**, the architect of the original 1929-1930 Baptist Old Peoples' Home and the subsequent 1953-1955 addition, was born in Oak Park, Illinois. He was the son of architect Eben Ezra Roberts, who is noteworthy as a Prairie School architect during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The younger Roberts attended Oak Park High School, then the University of Illinois, where he received a B.S. degree in 1921. He also studied at the University of Michigan, undertaking "special work." His higher education was interrupted by World War I, during which he served in Europe with a British hospital unit, mustering out at war's end with a rank of 2nd Lieutenant, Sanitary Corps.<sup>xliii</sup>

Both before and after the war, Elmer Roberts worked as a draftsman for his father, starting as early as 1914 and continuing until 1923, at which time the older Roberts took the younger on as his junior partner in the firm of E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts (Partnership). Soon after, by 1926, the elder Roberts stepped back from active

<sup>xli</sup> HARGIS, <https://www.illinois.gov/ihpa/Preserve/Pages/HARGIS.aspx>; accessed August 2, 2016.

<sup>xlii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xliii</sup> Biographical information for Elmer C. Roberts is taken from his entries in the *American Architects Directory*, 1956, 1962, and 1970; "E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts, Inc.," Questionnaire for Architects' Roster and/or Register of Architects Qualified for Federal Public Works, American Institute of Architects, dated October 11, 1946; "Elmer C. Roberts," and obituary, *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1981. Additional information about specific Roberts commissions found in other sources are footnoted individually.

Baptist Retirement Home

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design practice in the partnership due to ill health. He died in 1943.

Subsequently, the firm of E.E. Roberts and Elmer C. Roberts (incorporated in 1932) began to diversify into larger building projects, including industrial buildings, warehouses, church additions, public libraries, and institutional buildings such as the Baptist Old Peoples' Home in Maywood. Elmer C. Roberts served as president of the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects from 1939 to 1940. He also was chairman of the Oak Park Planning Commission in 1940.

**Bertram Anton Weber (1898-1989)**, the architect for the 1964-1965 addition to the Baptist Retirement Home, was born in Chicago. As with Elmer Roberts, Weber was the son of a noted Chicago architect, Peter J. Weber, who had worked for D.H. Burnham & Co., designing the Fisher Building on South Dearborn, before opening his own office. The younger Weber graduated from Evanston Township High School in 1916, then attended Northwestern University for 2 1/2 years. Transferring to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he received a B.S. in architecture in 1922.

Bertram Weber briefly worked for Chicago architect Howard Van Doren Shaw before his father's death in 1923, upon which time the younger Weber took over the elder's practice. The following year, Weber formed the firm of White and Weber with architect Charles E. White, Jr. During this partnership, Weber was in charge of design. In 1936, White died, and the firm's name became Bertram A. Weber, Architect. In addition to his private practice, during the World War II years of 1941 to 1945, Weber was vice-president of Central States Architects and Engineers, an association of architects and engineers formed to do government work. In 1973, the firm name changed again to Weber & Weber when Bertram Weber's son John became a partner.<sup>xliv</sup>

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<sup>xliv</sup> Biographical information on Weber is taken from "Bertram Weber, architect for 64 years," *Chicago Tribune*, December 19, 1989, and "Bertram A. Weber," membership files, American Institute of Architects. Additional information about specific Weber commissions found in other sources are footnoted individually.

**Baptist Retirement Home**

Name of Property

**Cook, Illinois**

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.6

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Baptist Retirement Home  
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois  
County and State

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 41.883980 -87.837223  
Latitude Longitude

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude Longitude

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude Longitude

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude Longitude

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Baptist Retirement Home is located in Maywood, Illinois, on a full city block bounded on the north by Randolph Street, on the West by South 4th Avenue, on the south by Pine Street, and on the east by South 3rd Avenue.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination boundaries encompass the entire parcel of land historically associated with the Baptist Retirement Home in Maywood, Illinois.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Emily Ramsey date February 27, 2017  
organization MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC telephone (312) 786-1700  
street & number 53 W. Jackson Blvd, Suite 1142. email eramsey@mac-ha.com  
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60604-3619

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).



Baptist Retirement Home

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

<b>Name of Property:</b>	Baptist Retirement Home		
<b>City or Vicinity:</b>	Maywood, Illinois		
<b>County:</b>	Cook	<b>State:</b>	Illinois
<b>Photographer:</b>	Emily Ramsey		
<b>Date Photographed:</b>	January 2016		

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

**Photo 1 of 22:** South and southeast elevations – looking northwest.  
**Photo 2 of 22:** South elevation, main entrance detail – looking north.  
**Photo 3 of 22:** West elevation – looking northeast.  
**Photo 4 of 22:** West elevation of chapel – looking southeast.  
**Photo 5 of 22:** North and west elevations – looking southeast.  
**Photo 6 of 22:** North and east elevations, porte-cochere detail – looking southwest.  
**Photo 7 of 22:** East and north elevations – looking southwest.  
**Photo 8 of 22:** East elevation – looking northwest.  
**Photo 9 of 22:** First Floor lobby of the 1930 building - looking west.  
**Photo 10 of 22:** First Floor lobby - looking east.  
**Photo 11 of 22:** First Floor dining room of the 1930 building - looking east.  
**Photo 12 of 22:** Typical wing of the 1930 building - looking southeast.  
**Photo 13 of 22:** First Floor chapel - looking south.  
**Photo 14 of 22:** First Floor lobby of the 1955/1965 building and entrance - looking northwest.  
**Photo 15 of 22:** Typical stair of the 1955/1965 building - looking northwest.  
**Photo 16 of 22:** Typical upper floor stair and corridor of the 1930 building - looking northwest.  
**Photo 17 of 22:** Fourth Floor corridor of the 1930 building - looking west.  
**Photo 18 of 22:** Fourth Floor, typical room in the 1930 building - looking south.  
**Photo 19 of 22:** Third Floor of the southeast wing of the 1930 building, detail - looking southeast.  
**Photo 20 of 22:** Typical upper floor lobby in the 1955/1965 building - looking southwest.  
**Photo 21 of 22:** Typical upper floor corridor in the 1955/1965 building - looking northwest.  
**Photo 22 of 22:** Fifth Floor of the 1955/1965 building - looking west.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

## List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.

### List of Figures:

**Figure 1:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1930.

**Figure 2:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1975.

**Figure 3:** A rendering of the Baptist Retirement Home (then the Baptist Old People's Home).  
*Maywood Herald*, April 3, 1930.

**Figure 4:** A postcard of the Baptist Old People's Home, 1941.

**Figure 5:** A rendering of the new Baptist Old People's Home, built in 1929-1930.  
*Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 8, 1928.

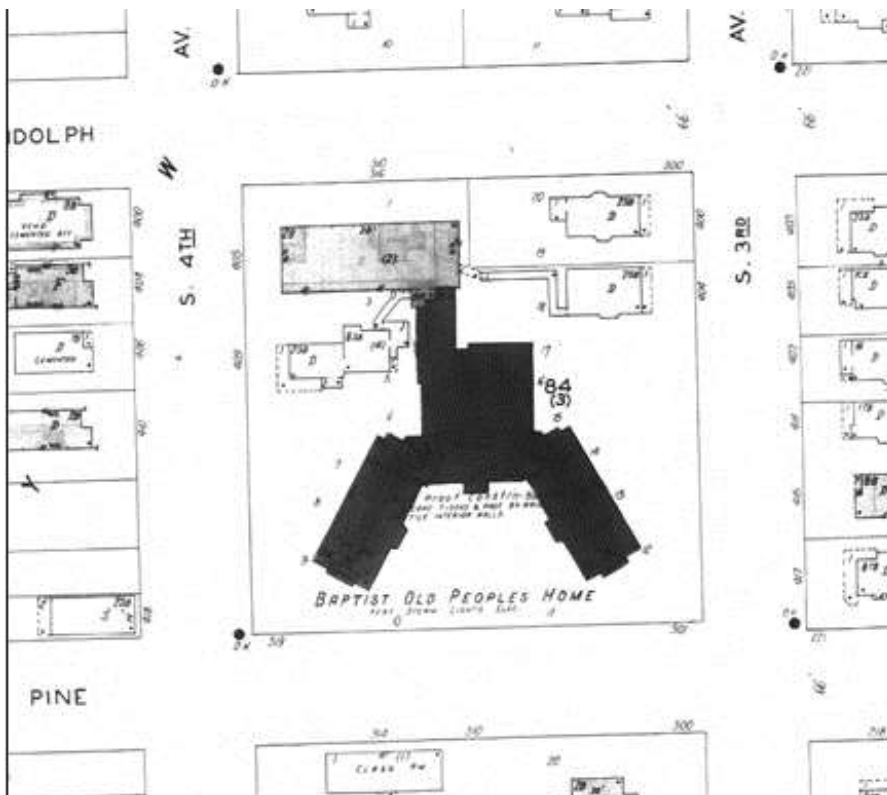
**Figure 6:** The main façade and front garden of the 1929-1930 building, circa 1935.

**Figure 7:** Photograph of the Baptist Old People's Home.  
*Maywood's Seventieth Festival of Progress* booklet in 1938.

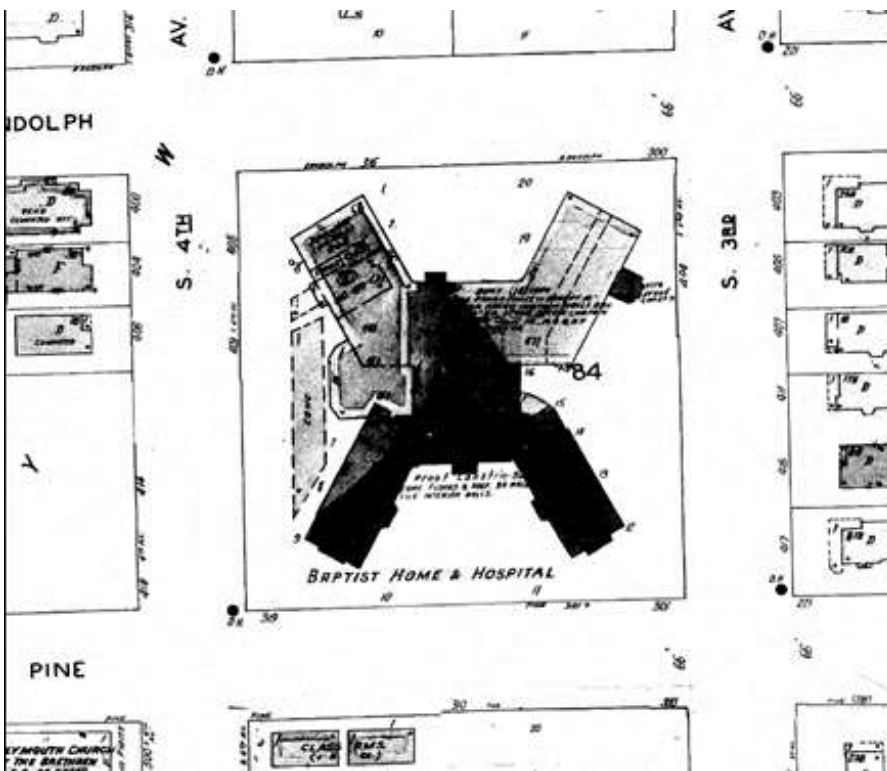
**Figure 8:** Postcard of the Baptist Home and Hospital, circa 1955.

**Figure 9:** Images of the 1954-1955 extension of the Baptist Home and Hospital,  
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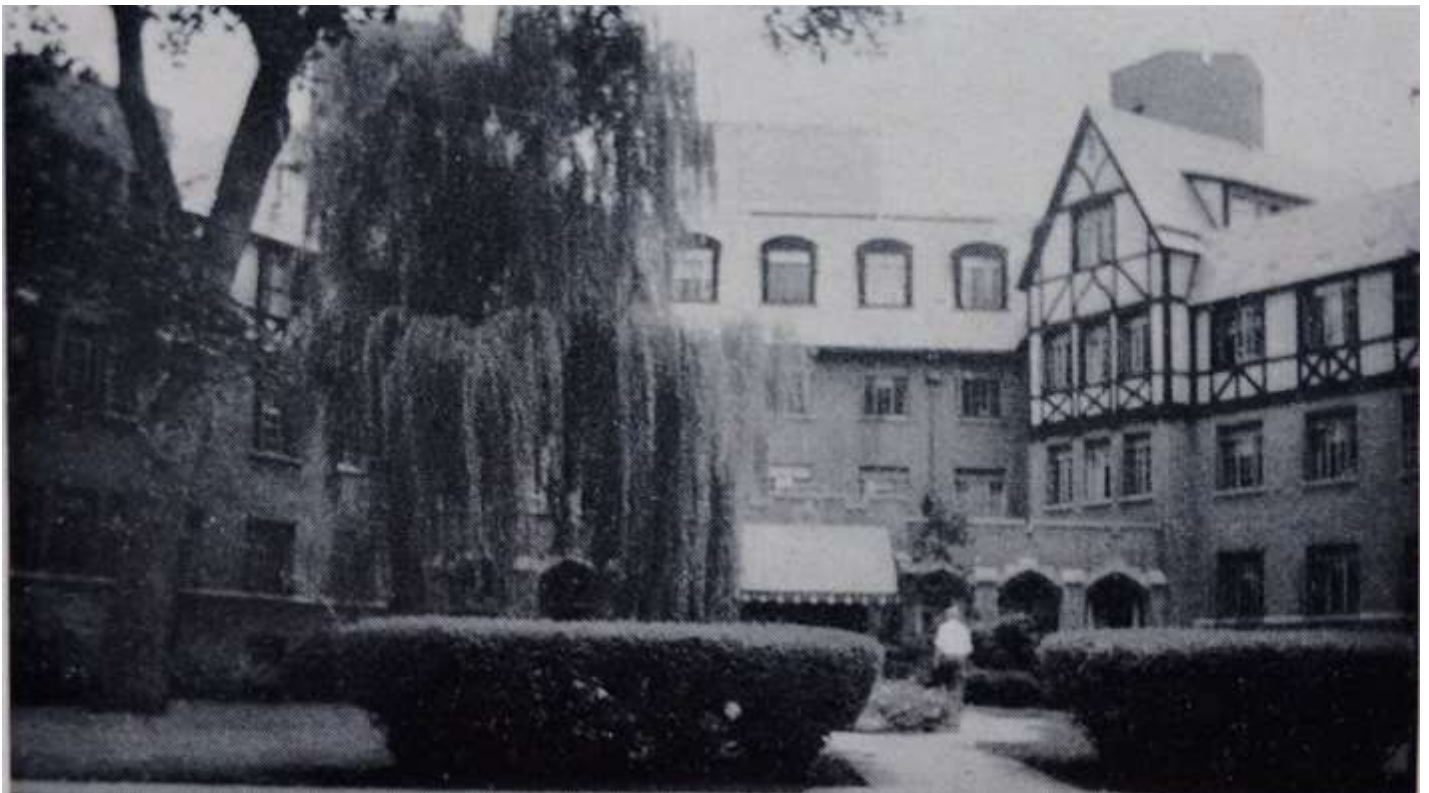




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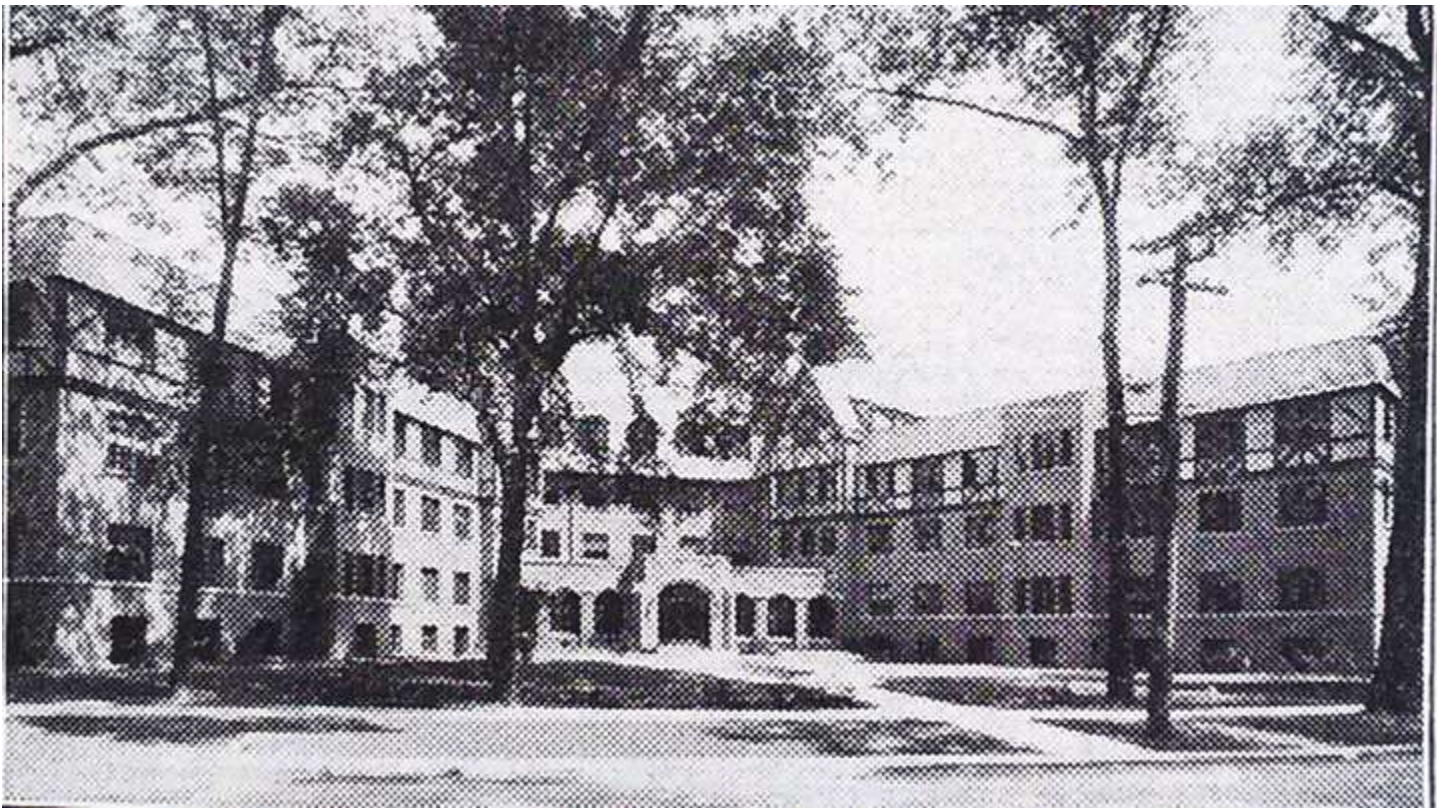


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